

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SP-02 INR-05

CIAE-00 PRS-01 SAB-01 SSO-00 INRE-00 /035 R

DRAFTED BY REVISED TEXT RECEIVED FROM WHITE HOUSE

APPROVED BY ARA:HARYAN

ARA/PAN:RWYROUGH (DRAFT)

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S/S- MR. ORTIZ

ARA/NC/C:DWCOX

NSC MBROWNELL

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O 272104Z AUG 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PN, CO, VE, CU

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO PUBLISH PRESIDENTIAL LETTER ON PANAMA
CANAL

REF: BOGOTA 7605

1. WHILE THERE IS NOTHING IN THE SUBSTANCE OF PRESIDENT
FORD'S LETTER OF JUNE 17 WHICH WOULD CAUSE US TO OBJECT TO
ITS RELEASE, WE BELIEVE PUBLICATION OF THE ORIGINAL
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INCOMING LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENTS OF COLOMBIA, VENEZUELA

AND COSTA RICA, WHICH CONTAINS SENSITIVE INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, COULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO THEM. TO AGREE TO RELEASE OF PRESIDENT FORD'S LETTER WITHOUT ALSO ACCEDING TO THE SAME FOR THE LETTER WHICH STIMULATED IT WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE DIFFICULT.

2. ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE PRESIDENTS WOULD DESIRE TO RELEASE PUBLICLY BOTH LETTERS AND NOT JUST PRESIDENT FORD'S REPLY, REQUEST YOU RESPOND TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S NOTE QUOTED IN REFTTEL WITH THE FOLLOWING OPERATIVE LANGUAGE INCLUDED:

3. QUOTE. I REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT MY GOVERNMENT CANNOT CONSENT TO THE PUBLIC RELEASE OF THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN THE CHIEF EXECUTIVES OF COLOMBIA, COSTA RICA AND VENEZUELA AND PRESIDENT FORD BECAUSE THE INCOMING LETTER OF MARCH 24, 1975 FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVES CONTAINS SENSITIVE INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF THE PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATIONS. I AM SURE THE GOVERNMENT OF COLOMBIA SHARES THE DESIRE OF MY GOVERNMENT NOT TO PREJUDICE THESE NEGOTIATIONS IN ANY WAY PARTICULARLY AT A TIME WHEN THEY ARE BEING ACTIVELY PURSUED. UNQUOTE.

4. DEPARTMENT IS REPLYING TO NOTE FROM COLOMBIAN EMBASSY IN THE SAME VEIN.

5. FOR CARACAS, PANAMA CITY, AND SAN JOSE: AMBASSADORS SHOULD ORALLY CONVEY TO FONMINS SUBSTANCE OF PARAGRAPH THREE ABOVE. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TEXT, PRESIDENT, PUBLICATIONS, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, CANALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE204258
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750297-0192
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750812/aaaaakhu.tel
Line Count: 90
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 75 BOGOTA 7605
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 SEP 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <17 NOV 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REQUEST TO PUBLISH PRESIDENTIAL LETTER ON PANAMA CANAL
TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, PN, CO, VE, CU, US, (FORD, GERALD R)
To: BOGOTA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006